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REMARKS

Claims 1-7 and 20-22 are currently pending in the subject application and are presently under consideration. Claims 14-18 and 23 have been withdrawn. Claims 1 and 20 have been amended as shown at pp. 2-6 of the Reply.

Favorable reconsideration of the subject patent application is respectfully requested in view of the comments and amendments herein.

**I. Rejection of Claims 1-7 and 20-22 Under 35 U.S.C. §102(e)**

Claims 1-7 and 20-22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Littau, *et al.* (U.S. 6,606,152). It is respectfully submitted that this rejection should be withdrawn for at least the following reasons. Greta does not teach or suggest each and every limitation of applicants' claimed invention.

For a prior art reference to anticipate, 35 U.S.C. §102 requires that "each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference." *In re Robertson*, 169 F.3d 743, 745, 49 USPQ2d 1949, 1950 (Fed. Cir. 1999) (*quoting Verdegaal Bros., Inc. v. Union Oil Co.*, 814 F.2d 628, 631, 2 USPQ2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987)).

The subject invention relates to feeding forward reticle fabrication data from one or more processes to one or more subsequent processes based upon signature data for one or more grid blocks from a grid pattern mapped to the reticle. For instance, the reticle could be mapped into an X by Y grid containing X times Y grid blocks. One or more reticle fabrication parameters from one or more processes can be obtained via scatterometry for any subset and combination of the grid blocks. One or more signatures can be created, and optionally saved, based upon any of these parameters and subsets of grid blocks. Thereafter, a control system can analyze the parameters and/or signatures, potentially from a library of saved signatures and associated data, and selectively feed forward fabrication control data to one or more subsequent processes on one or more components. These novel features of applicants' invention are clearly delineated in the claims. In particular, independent claims 1 and 20 recite *map a reticle into a grid pattern consisting of a plurality of grid blocks*. By utilizing grid blocks, selective portions of the reticle

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can be examined alone or in combination with other portions, such as for different processes, allowing for a more precise analysis of the reticle fabrication process.

Littau, *et al.* does not teach or suggest the aforementioned novel aspects of applicants' invention as recited in the subject claims. Littau, *et al.* is concerned with employing diffraction gradients in a wafer to calibrate center of focus for a lithography device. In particular, Littau, *et al.* determines diffraction signatures for multiple diffraction gradients on the wafer and employs focus algorithms on the signatures to determine center of focus. There is, however, no mention within Littau, *et al.* regarding grid blocks as claimed. Specifically, Littau, *et al.* nowhere discloses mapping a reticle into a grid pattern consisting of a plurality of grid blocks.

In view of at least the above, it is respectfully submitted that Littau *et al.* does not teach or suggest applicants' invention as recited in independent claims 1 and 20 (and claims 2-7 and 21-22 which respectively depend there from). Accordingly, this rejection should be withdrawn.

10/050,472G0241**Conclusion**

The present application is believed to be in condition for allowance in view of the above comments and amendments. A prompt action to such end is earnestly solicited.

In the event any fees are due in connection with this document, the Commissioner is authorized to charge those fees to Deposit Account No. 50-1063[AMDP768US].

Should the Examiner believe a telephone interview would be helpful to expedite favorable prosecution, the Examiner is invited to contact applicants' undersigned representative at the telephone number below.

Respectfully submitted,

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